Science Teaching Lab Building ranks top of Georgia State priorities

By Leah Harris

University officials and a network of alumni are preparing to ask the Georgia Legislature for $49.4 million in construction funding when it goes into session in January.

The funding would be used to construct the 202,000-square-foot Parker H. Pete Science Teaching Laboratory Building at Decatur Street and Piedmont Avenue. The project ranks first among six legislative priorities designated by Georgia State’s Office of State Relations this year.

“We have state, federal and private support all being hauled into that building, so it’s certainly being recognized as a critical facility, which will help us to serve the increasing demand to teach undergraduate science classes,” said Dene Sheheane, Georgia State’s assistant vice president for external affairs.

The university received nearly $3 million from the state in 2005 to design the science building, which Sheheane says will become part of a $140 million University Science Park complex. That’s the scenario facing visitors to parts of Georgia State priorities will improve the instruction and quality of teaching, research and service at Georgia State. “All of these components help us to achieve a premier research university, but our most pressing need is our Science Teaching Lab Building.”

For more information, or to help promote Georgia State’s legislative priorities, contact the Office of State Relations at 404/651-2031.

Georgia State’s Legislative Priorities at a Glance

Science Teaching Laboratory Building:
Officially seek $49.4 million to fund the state portion of the construction of a 202,000-square-foot Science Teaching Laboratory Building at Decatur Street and Piedmont Avenue.

Natural Science Center exhaust stack replacement:
Request would pay for $5 million to replace exhaust stacks and roofing on the Natural Science Center.

Major repairs and renovations:
The university is supporting the University System of Georgia request of $68.2 million for major repairs and renovations. Georgia State’s approximate share of the request is $5 million.

Alpharetta Center Accelerated Degree Program:
Georgia State seeks $1 million to launch a program through which 195 high school seniors will be able to take college coursework starting in fall 2006.

Board of Regents FY 2007 Formula Funds:
The university is supporting the University System of Georgia request for $54 million to be shared by all state universities and community colleges, which will help us to serve the increasing demand to teach undergraduate science classes,” said Dene Sheheane, Georgia State’s assistant vice president for external affairs.

The university is supporting a request for the legislature to reauthorize a bill that allows the university to carry forward certain non-state funds from one fiscal year to the next.

and roofing on the Natural Science Center. The Alpharetta Center program would enable 195 high school seniors to take college coursework starting in fall 2006. Those students could then earn their bachelor’s degree in three years. The money would be used for a variety of tasks to operate the system including, hiring additional staff, creating the Web master position, maintaining the system and renovations. University officials project 710 students in the program by fall 2009.

To help garner support on behalf of Georgia State, officials hope to work with 28 alumni serving in the state legislature, as well as the university’s legislative alumni network, called AlumNet. Established in 1995, AlumNet is a group of 50 alumni residing in Georgia, who volunteer to advocate on behalf Georgia State to state legislators and other government officials. Members are appointed for a two-year term by Georgia State President Carl Patton. “We have tried to build our advocacy efforts around having strong relationships with our state leaders,” Sheheane said. “We want to be sure the message of the impact Georgia State is having all across the state of Georgia.”

Administrators and AlumNet members are working to share their support of Georgia State’s priorities with Gov. Sonny Perdue, who will prepare budget recommendations for the General Assembly to consider for the 2007 fiscal year. The Science Teaching Laboratory Building was No. 7 on the Board of Regents Major Capital Priority List this year, which Perdue will use to develop his budget recommendations. After the governor announces his recommendations, advocates will continue to share their support with other legislators with hopes that additional items may be added to the budget, Sheheane said.

Sheheane said all of this year’s legislative priorities will improve the instruction and quality of teaching, research and service at Georgia State. “All of these components help us to achieve a premier research university, but our most pressing need is our Science Teaching Lab Building.”

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University revamps Web site to create unified look

New site-management system allows for easier updates

By Melanie Medina

Imagine a book in which every chapter had been written by a different author. Each section was designed differently and created according to its own set of rules, resulting in a complete lack of cohesion from page to page.

That’s the scenario facing visitors to parts of Georgia State University’s Web site, which is currently comprised of departmental Web pages lacking a unified look. This is the case even within its own site – can frustrate for visitors, including prospective students or alumni searching for specific information.

Fortunately, the site is about to be revamped from the ground up, with university officials implementing a Web site content management system called RedDot that all departments will be required to use.

“The goal of the project is to bring some consistency to the university in terms of Web development and standards,” said Jarrett King, manager of the experience design group, the IS&T arm charged with the task of implementing the system.

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The university is supporting a request for the legislature to reauthorize a bill that allows the university to carry forward certain non-state funds from one fiscal year to the next. The legislature announced his recommendations, advocates will continue to share their support with other legislators with hopes that additional items may be added to the budget, Sheheane said.

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Rashed Muhammad, Web coordinator for the Office of University Research Services and Administration, is in the process of porting his department’s old site into the RedDot system. He said that while there is a sharp learning curve for Web masters comfortable creating pages in a more traditional manner, the new system will be better for designers and end users in the long run. “Overall, this is a good move for the Web community and the university as a whole,” he said.

Muhammad’s department is one of several administrative units already using RedDot. Through his department’s old Web site hasn’t been completely converted to the new system yet, he expects the process to be complete in early 2006. Other departments have been trained in RedDot and will soon begin maintaining their sites using the system.

No firm deadline has been set as to when all departments must use the new system – but for visitors to Georgia State’s Web site, the sooner, the better.

What need does a religious studies department fill?

It seems clear in a post-9/11 world that ignorance about various religions and varying religious beliefs can be deadly. This is not to say that knowledge of Islamic scripture or theology would have helped the FBI or CIA in August 2001, but there is far more to the study of religion than an analysis of scripture and theology. There is geography, history, politics, culture – the sorts of background issues which would undoubtedly help us to try to negotiate with a part of the world about which we remain woefully ignorant.

What are some of the department’s strengths?

What impresses me is the geographic range of the faculty in this department. We have one person each working primarily on traditions of the Far East, South Asia, the Middle East, Western Europe and the Americas.

What are some of the goals for the department over the next five years?

High on my list would be [to] address the apparently never-ending quibble between religion and science. Religion and science have long looked over one another’s shoulder, investigating what the other is doing may affect the other, for better or worse, especially concerning issues of moral importance.

What’s the best part of your job?

I get to meet interesting people. I am already stunned and humbled by the diversity of our students and the rich life experiences they bring to the classroom. The same is true of my colleagues, all of whom travel, and take pictures and bring all of this richness to our common table.

“Gas spending dings discretionary spending. Gas is not a problem. Poker game money is.”

— Rajeev Dhawan, director of the Robinson College of Business’ Economic Forecasting Center, as quoted in an Atlanta-Journal Constitution article about energy prices being more of a nuisance than a serious concern.
Georgia Pro-K Program students rank above national standards

Georgia students enrolled in the state’s Pro-K Program made major academic progress as they advanced through to first grade, according to a recently released study by a research team headed by Gary Henry, a professor in the Andrey Young School of Policy Studies.

Findings from “The Georgia Early Child- hood Study: 2001-04” compared four-year-old children in the Georgia Pro-K Program to children in other early-childhood education settings, such as Head Start or private preschools or daycare centers. The final study sample included 666 children from the Pro-K Program and 204 children from other programs.

“It is clear the Georgia Pro-K Program has tak- en root, and the brains of the investment are show- ing up in terms of more language and behavioral skills for the children who attend the program,” Henry said. “The gains that these young children post in their early years of schooling are signifi- cantly greater than the gains that many children in many cases, exceeding those that were recorded for other, often more expensive programs.”

The study found that the skill gap for at-risk children has been reduced by Georgia Pro-K and makes future recommendations to continue to close the gap, including universal Pro-K programs for children younger than 4 years of age.

College of Arts and Sciences

New department of geosciences formed

Georgia State has approved creation of two new departments: the department of geosciences and the department of anthropology. Effective Jan. 1, geosciences will be a merger of the departments of geology and geography, which was formerly a part of the department of anthropol- ogy and geology. “Faculty in these areas have been talking about the ways they can work together,” said college dean Lauren Adamson. “Putting geography and geology together al- together,” said college dean Lauren Adamson.

Effective Jan. 1, geosciences will be a new, integrated geosciences program." While the fallout from Delta will negatively impact Georgia’s economy, Dhawan said that other positive factors will help to create para- normal growth in the state. According to his “Forecast of Georgia and Atlanta,” increased spending will continue to plague the nation’s economy through mid-2006 according to Rajat Dhawan, director of the Economic Forecasting Center at the J. Mack Robinson College of Business, in his “Forecast of the Na- tion” presentation.

“Expect the one-two punch from Katrina and Rita to impact GDP growth negatively by only 0.2 percent over the next four quarters,” Dhawan said. “The biggest impact from the storms is taking place now, in the fourth quarter of 2005, when consumption is expected to mod- erate sharply from its 3.9 percent pace in the third quarter to only a 1.5 percent growth rate.”

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Georgia State University Police Department wins award, grant for pedestrian safety

The Governor’s Office of Highway Safety recently awarded the Georgia State University Police Department a $15,200 grant for two BMW police motorcycles and a device that logs data on a speed detector. The grant money also will be used to create pedestrian-safety brochures, said James Porter, a sergeant in the office of professional standards of the Georgia State Police Department.

Also, Pedestrians Educating Drivers in Safety, a pedestrian-safety advocacy organization, awarded the department the 2005 Golden Shoe Award for effective pedestrian-safety enforcement. The department was ranked first in Georgia among city, county and state departments.

The department was awarded the 2005 Golden Shoe Award for effective pedestrian-safety enforcement. The award recognizes outstanding work in promoting and documenting student learning. A faculty committee selected the winning departments from the reports on student learning outcomes that are submitted by all departments as part of their annual report. Departments were judged on having assessed all degree programs, assessing all students (or a sufficiently large sample), submitting the report on time, adhering to the assessment plan that was submitted, collecting directly assessed data on student learning (including general education learning outcomes), and using those data for planning changes to the program of study and/or future assessment procedures.

The dollar value of the award is $250 for each tenure-track and full-time non-tenure-track faculty who contribute to the instructional department’s mission. For details about the awards, visit http://educa-

A Week of Celebration in Honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“Global Perspectives, Grassroots Initiatives”

January 16-20, 2006

Monday, January 16, 2006: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Holiday — “A Day On, Not a Day Off”

Occurring at various times and locations within the metropolitan Atlanta area, students, faculty, staff and community members will be encouraged to get involved and honor Dr. King by participating in direct service projects. Sponsored by the Office of Community Service and Hands on Atlanta. Contact www.randommania.org or 404/465-9043 for more information.

Tuesday, January 17, 2006: “Kingship...Leading with Ethics” - 12:30pm, Location TBD. Join us for a fun and informative lunchtime workshop designed to explore the ethical components of student decisions. Lunch will be provided for the first 25 students. Sponsored by Leadership Georgia State. Contact 404/465-9031 for more information.

Tuesday, January 17, 2006: University Speaker’s Series - Morris Dees, Founder of Southern Poverty Law Center, 3pm, Student Center Speaker’s Auditorium. The topic of this speech will be “Our Own Best Interests: How Defending Human Rights Benefits Us All.”

Wednesday, January 18, 2006: Project Empty Bowls - 6pm, Student Center Court Salon. This annual event will center on a discussion regarding the topic of poverty in society. A silent auction of ceramic bowls will be held to support the event. Sponsored with the Office of Community Service, Study Abroad Programs, the Student League of Independent Potters (SLIP) and Golden Key International Honour Society. Contact 404/465-9031 for more information.

Thursday, January 19, 2006: 23rd Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Convocation, 4pm, Speaker’s Auditorium. This traditional program pays tribute to Dr. King and his legacy. Recipients of the 2006 Torch of Peace Award and the Hosa Williams Award for Community Activism will be announced. A reception will follow. Sponsored by Student Life and Leadership/Intercultural Relations. Contact 404/465-9031 for more information.

Thursday, January 19, 2006: Movie and discussion at the Village, 7pm, 108-109 Olympia. Village residents and their escorted guests will watch Intolerance, which imagines what could have occurred if Dr. King and Malcolm X had met to discuss their ideals during the height of the Civil Rights Movement and engage in an enlightening conversation related to movie’s content. Sponsored by the Department of Housing. Contact 404/464-5815.

Friday, January 20, 2006: Safe Zone Workshop, 12pm, Location TBD. Workshop participants will learn how to be an ally for members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) community. Contact 404/465-9031 for more information.

For additional information on King Week activities, please see www.gsu.edu/~kwwicr
• Tuesday, Dec. 13
6 p.m. Women’s basketball. Lady Panthers vs. Norfolk State. Sports Arena. $4. 404/651-4629.

• Thursday, Dec. 15
Noon Feed Your Senses. This holiday performance features professional caterers “Like the Dickeys.” Free. Bring your lunch or buy a boxed meal for $5. Radio Center for the Performing Arts. 404/651-4727 or www.rialtocenter.org.

• Saturday, Dec. 17


6 p.m. Holiday Iron Pour and Silent Auction. Edgewood Sculpture Building. Watch artists and students pour thousands of pounds of iron into the sculpture studio’s furnace and cast it into molds. Fee to attend. Cast and mold your own sculpture for $10. 404/651-4227 or 404/651-2434.

• Saturday, Dec. 17 through Sunday, Dec. 18

• Monday, Dec. 19
6 p.m. Women’s basketball. Lady Panthers vs. Hampton. Sports Arena. $4. 404/651-4629.

• Thursday, Dec. 29 through Friday, Dec. 30

• Thursday, Jan. 5
5 p.m. First Thursday Downtown Arts Walk. Take a self-guided tour and experience art featured at various venues in historic downtown Atlanta. Free. 404/651-4727 or www.rialto.org.

• Friday, Jan. 6
6 p.m. Women’s basketball. Lady Panthers vs. William & Mary. Sports Arena. $4. 404/651-4629.

• Sunday, Jan. 8
2 p.m. Women’s basketball. Lady Panthers vs. UNC-Wilmington. Sports Arena. $4. 404/651-4629.

• Thursday, Jan. 12
7 p.m. Men’s basketball. Panthers vs. Old Dominion University. Sports Arena. $7. 404/651-4629.

• Saturday, Jan. 14

• Saturday, Jan. 15
3 p.m. Pianists for New Orleans. Hurricane Katrina benefit concert. Kopple Rechial Hall. $5. 404/651-2580.

• Tuesday, Jan. 17
3 p.m. University Speaker Series lecture. Morris Dees, founder of Southern Poverty Law Center, will speak at the Student Center Speaker’s Auditorium. Free. Dees will sign his book, Gathering Storm: America’s Misfits and A Lawyer’s Journey after the lecture. 404/651-3010.

• Wednesday, Jan. 18

• Thursday, Jan. 19
4 p.m. 23rd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation. Author and journalist Kevin Powell is the keynote speaker. The Torch of Peace Awards and the Hosa Williams Award for Community Activism will be presented after the program. Convocation is in collaboration with Office of Student Life and Leadership/Intercultural Relations. Student Center Speaker’s Auditorium. Free. 404/463-9722.

• Friday, Jan. 20
6 p.m. Women’s basketball. Lady Panthers vs. Northeastern. Sports Arena. $4. 404/651-4629.

• Sunday, Jan. 22
2 p.m. Women’s basketball. Lady Panthers vs. Hofstra. Sports Arena. $4. 404/651-4629.


Karen Minyard, executive director of the Georgia Health Policy Center within the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, has been appointed to the Cervical Cancer Elimination Task Force by Gov. Sonny Perdue. The group was created by the Georgia legislature and will produce two reports and then sunset at the end of June 2006.

Bruce Seamann, associate professor of economics, was one of two keynote speakers for the Argosy Foundation to address the topic, “Local Economic Development and the Arts,” in Milwaukee, Wis.

Eric Tovmssony, assistant professor of public administration and urban studies, was appointed to the American Society for Public Administration’s Katrina Task Force by ASPA President Don Menzel.

Carol White, marketing instructor, presented “Functional Role Theory and the Influence of Gender” at the Association for Business Communication’s 78th annual meeting in Irvine, Calif. White also was selected to serve a third year as chair of the Student Awards Committee for ABC, an international professional organization for teachers of communication.

Katherine Willowsby, professor of public administration and urban studies, was appointed by Gov. Sonny Perdue’s Procurement Transformation Governance Council.

W. David Wilson and David W. Boykin, professors of chemistry, were among the authors of “Out-of-Shape DNA Minor Groove Binders. Induced Fit Interactions of Heterocyclic Dications with the DNA Minor Groove,” which was chosen as a “Hot Article” for the month of November by the journal, Biochemistry.

Applause recognizes notable accomplishments of faculty, staff and administrators in the areas of teaching, research and service. E-mail items to umedia@gsu.edu.